



## Self-Control

### Josh Morris

**Focus** The Holy Spirit empowers us to exhibit the fruits of the Spirit.

**Fun** Discuss which literal fruit might be attributed to each fruit of the Spirit.

**Review** Key Scriptures: Galatians 5:22–23; 2 Timothy 3:2–4; Matthew 18:21–35

1. Control your desires. Desires drive your actions. When you seek pleasure over virtue, you are in danger. Every pleasure you indulge in creates a new master you must serve.
2. Control your ego. When your ego is hurt or broken, you lash out. You have absolute control over how much you give your heart and emotions to any situation. Remember, you don't always know what is going on in another person's life, that might cause them to hurt or insult you.
3. Choose to forgive. Release bitterness to accept forgiveness from Jesus. If you are holding onto a grudge, release that person through forgiveness so God can deal with them and bring healing to you.

**\*Group Dynamics Idea\*** Form accountability groups or pairs. If someone is struggling in an area, they can reach out to their accountability group or partner for encouragement and to celebrate their victories.

**Discuss** 1. What are some desires we have trouble controlling? Anger, lust, impatience, etc. What are some strategies you have used to combat those desires and turn them over to God?

2. Taking offense is one way our ego gets in the way of relationships. How can we put others' needs ahead of our own?
3. It's easy to say we should forgive others, but sometimes it can be difficult. Making the choice to forgive is the first step. What are some other strategies we can implement to help us on this journey? For example, write out a grievance and throw it away, or pray for someone who hurt you.

### **Take Home**

As we conclude, remember the following:

- Submit your desires to God.
- Put others' needs ahead of your own.
- Make a practice of forgiving others.

### **Prayer**

Lord God, thank You for Your forgiveness of our sins. Thank You for coming to earth and sacrificing Yourself to satisfy our great need of a savior. Lord, help us to forgive the way You have forgiven us. Teach us to control our desires and our egos. Teach us how to forgive and how to trust You for justice. We love You, Lord, and thank You for Your guidance. Help us be lights that reflect Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

**\*New Leader Tip\*** If you or someone in your group needs prayer, text prayer requests to 71010. If someone in your group needs healing, invite them to join the Healing Room via Zoom for prayer.